

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS VATICAN 000700

SIPDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (REMOVED PARA MARKING)

DEPT FOR EUR/WE (MENNUTI), NEA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPDC](#) [PREL](#) [PREL](#) [VT](#) [VTOPDC](#)

SUBJECT: JOINT LETTER TO PRESIDENT BUSH FROM PRESIDENT OF
THE PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE AND
PRESIDENT OF ISLAMIC FORUM FOR DIALOGUE

1. PLEASE DELIVER THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT BUSH
FROM ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL L. FITZGERALD, PRESIDENT OF THE
PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE AND PROF. DR.
HAMID A. AL-RIFAIE, PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC
FORUM FOR DIALOGUE. THE SIGNED ORIGINAL WILL FOLLOW VIA POUCH.
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PAGE 02 VATICA 00700 220302Z

2. BEGIN TEXT:

H.E. PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
THE WHITE HOUSE

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

YOU ARE UNDOUBTEDLY MORE AWARE THAN ANY ONE ELSE THAT THE
WORLD TODAY IS ON THE BRINK OF A DESTRUCTIVE WAR WHICH THOUGH
CONCENTRATED ON ONE REGION MIGHT LEAD TO A GLOBAL
CONFLAGRATION. WE RECOGNIZE PERFECTLY THE IMPORTANCE OF WORLD
COOPERATION TO ELIMINATE ALL KINDS OF WEAPONS OF MASS
DESTRUCTION WHEREVER THEY MAY BE FOUND WITHOUT
DISCRIMINATION. WE APPRECIATE ALSO THE URGENT NEED TO COMBAT
TERRORISM AND PUT AN END TO THE CULTURE OF TERRORISM WHEREVER
IT MAY EXIST. AT THE SAME TIME WE BELIEVE THAT THIS TASK IS
COMPLICATED. IT REQUIRES THE BACKING OF AN INTERNATIONAL
CONSENSUS, BOTH OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL. MORE TIME IS NEEDED
TO BRING ABOUT INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TO ROOT OUT THE
CULTURE OF TERROR AND TO ESTABLISH A CULTURE OF LOVE,
SECURITY AND PEACE FOR THE WHOLE OF HUMANITY INCLUDING FUTURE
GENERATIONS.

WE THEREFORE URGE YOU, AS WE URGE BY A SIMILAR LETTER H.E.
PRIME MINISTER TONY BLAIR AND H.E. PRESIDENT SADDAM HUSSEIN,
AND AS WE WOULD URGE EVERY WORLD LEADER, TO FOREGO THE OPTION
OF WAR AS A WAY OF ACHIEVING THESE NOBLE GOALS. THE OPTION OF
WAR WOULD ONLY COMPLICATE MATTERS FURTHER, SINCE IT WOULD
OPEN THE DOOR TO A TRAGIC SERIES OF CONFLICTS AND ACTS OF
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PAGE 03 VATICA 00700 220302Z
TERROR THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. IT WOULD TEND TO LEND
JUSTIFICATION TO TERRORISM AND THUS INCREASE THE NUMBER OF
ITS SUPPORTERS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

AS WE WRITE THIS LETTER TO YOU, YOUR EXCELLENCY, WE BELIEVE
THAT YOU WILL GIVE IT SERIOUS CONSIDERATION, RECOGNIZING THAT
OUR SOLE INTENTION IS TO SAVE HUMANITY AND THE ENVIRONMENT
FROM A TERRIBLE DISASTER. WE WISH TO ASSURE YOU THAT
RELIGIOUS LEADERS OF THE WORLD ARE READY TO COOPERATE WITH
THE UNITED NATIONS IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE SECURITY, PROSPERITY
AND PEACE FOR ALL HUMAN SOCIETIES.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO A POSITIVE RESPONSE ON YOUR PART.

ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL L. FITZGERALD /S/

AND

PROF. DR. HAMID A. AL-RIFAIE /S/

END TEXT.

3. COMMENT: ARCHBISHOP FITZGERALD HEADS THE HOLY SEE'S
COUNCIL ON INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE, WHICH IS RESPONSIBLE FOR
OUTREACH TO MUSLIM GROUPS. THE INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC FORUM
FOR DIALOGUE IS THE COUNCIL'S PRINCIPAL INTERLOCUTOR IN THE
MUSLIM WORLD. TOGETHER THEY HAVE ESTABLISHED AN ONGOING
DIALOGUE THAT HAS ADVOCATED MODERATION AND TOLERANCE AND HAS
CONTRIBUTED TO GREATER UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE MUSLIM AND
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES. A SIMILAR LETTER WAS SENT AT THE SAME
TIME TO PRIME MINISTER BLAIR ALONG WITH A MODIFIED ONE TO
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PAGE 04 VATICA 00700 220302Z
SADDAM HUSSEIN URGING HIM TO COMPLY WITH UN RESOLUTIONS.
FITZGERALD, WHO HAS LONG EXPERIENCE WITH THE MUSLIM WORLD,
HAS EXPRESSED TO US HIS CONCERN ABOUT THE FALLOUT OF A WAR IN

IRAQ FOR THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM, AND THIS LETTER IS NO DOUBT INTENDED TO REINFORCE THE SHARED DESIRE OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS OF BOTH FAITHS TO AVOID A WAR.

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PAGE 01 VATICA 00700 210646Z
ACTION EUR-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	CIAE-00	CPR-02	INL-00
	DODE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	UTED-00	VC-00	TEDE-00	INR-00
	IO-00	VCE-00	NEA-00	DCP-01	NSAE-00	PA-00	PRS-00
	IRM-00	SSC-01	SSO-00	SS-00	TEST-00	USIE-00	R-00
	EPAE-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00	SAS-00	/004W		

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O 210557Z FEB 03
FM AMEMBASSY VATICAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY RIYADH PRIORITY
AMCONSUL JEDDAH PRIORITY

UNCLAS VATICAN 000700

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PAGE 02 VATICA 00700 210646Z

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